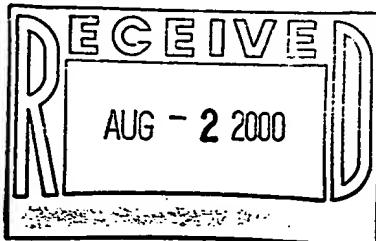


PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

From the
INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINING AUTHORITY

To: DAVID P. GORDON
65 WOODS END ROAD
STAMFORD, CT 06905



M

PCT

NOTIFICATION OF TRANSMITTAL OF INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

(PCT Rule 71.1)

28 JUL 2000

Applicant's or agent's file reference GDC-136 PCT	IMPORTANT NOTIFICATION	
International application No. PCT/US99/22651	International filing date (day/month/year) 29 SEPTEMBER 1999	Priority Date (day/month/year) 02 OCTOBER 1998
Applicant GENERAL DATACOMM, INC.		

1. The applicant is hereby notified that this International Preliminary Examining Authority transmits herewith the international preliminary examination report and its annexes, if any, established on the international application.
2. A copy of the report and its annexes, if any, is being transmitted to the International Bureau for communication to all the elected Offices.
3. Where required by any of the elected Offices, the International Bureau will prepare an English translation of the report (but not of any annexes) and will transmit such translation to those Offices.
4. **REMINDER**

The applicant must enter the national phase before each elected Office by performing certain acts (filing translations and paying national fees) within 30 months from the priority date (or later in some Offices)(Article 39(1))(see also the reminder sent by the International Bureau with Form PCT/I/3/301).

Where a translation of the international application must be furnished to an elected Office, that translation must contain a translation of any annexes to the international preliminary examination report. It is the applicant's responsibility to prepare and furnish such translation directly to each elected Office concerned.

For further details on the applicable time limits and requirements of the elected Offices, see Volume II of the PCT Applicant's Guide.

Name and mailing address of the IPEA/US Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks Box PCT Washington, D.C. 20231 Facsimile No. (703) 305-3230	Authorized officer Le Hien Luu Telephone No. (703) 305-9650 <i>James R. Matthews</i>
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PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

Applicant's or agent's file reference GDC-136 PCT	FOR FURTHER ACTION See Notification of Transmittal of International Preliminary Examination Report (Form PCT/IPEA/416)	
International application No. PCT/US99/22651	International filing date (day/month/year) 29 SEPTEMBER 1999	Priority date (day/month/year) 02 OCTOBER 1998
International Patent Classification (IPC) or national classification and IPC IPC(7): G06F 15/16, 15/163, 16/177 and US Cl.: 709/223		
Applicant GENERAL DATACOMM, INC.		

1. This international preliminary examination report has been prepared by this International Preliminary Examining Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.

2. This REPORT consists of a total of 3 sheets.

This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, i.e., sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis for this report and/or sheets containing rectifications made before this Authority. (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions under the PCT).

These annexes consist of a total of 0 sheets.

3. This report contains indications relating to the following items:

- I Basis of the report
- II Priority
- III Non-establishment of report with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability
- IV Lack of unity of invention
- V Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
- VI Certain documents cited
- VII Certain defects in the international application
- VIII Certain observations on the international application

Date of submission of the demand 23 MARCH 2000	Date of completion of this report 19 JULY 2000
Name and mailing address of the IPEA/US Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks Box PCT Washington, D.C. 20231	Authorized officer Le Hien Luu <i>James R. Matthews</i>
Facsimile No. (703) 305-3230	Telephone No. (703) 305-9650

I. Basis of the report

1. With regard to the elements of the international application:*

 the international application as originally filed the description:

pages 1-17 _____, as originally filed

pages NONE _____, filed with the demand

pages NONE _____, filed with the letter of _____

 the claims:

pages 18-20 _____, as originally filed

pages NONE _____, as amended (together with any statement) under Article 19

pages NONE _____, filed with the demand

pages NONE _____, filed with the letter of _____

 the drawings:

pages 1-2 _____, as originally filed

pages NONE _____, filed with the demand

pages NONE _____, filed with the letter of _____

 the sequence listing part of the description:

pages NONE _____, as originally filed

pages NONE _____, filed with the demand

pages NONE _____, filed with the letter of _____

2. With regard to the language, all the elements marked above were available or furnished to this Authority in the language in which the international application was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

These elements were available or furnished to this Authority in the following language _____ which is:

 the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (under Rule 23.1(b)). the language of publication of the international application (under Rule 48.3(b)). the language of the translation furnished for the purposes of international preliminary examination (under Rules 55.2 and/or 55.3).

3. With regard to any nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence disclosed in the international application, the international preliminary examination was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing:

 contained in the international application in printed form. filed together with the international application in computer readable form. furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form. furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form. The statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished. The statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished.4. The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of: the description, pages NONE the claims, Nos. NONE the drawings, sheets Fig. NONE5. This report has been drawn as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed, as indicated in the Supplemental Box (Rule 70.2(e)).**

* Replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report since they do not contain amendments (Rules 70.16 and 70.17).

** Any replacement sheet containing such amendments must be referred to under item 1 and annexed to this report.

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

International application No.

PCT/US99/22651

V. Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement**1. statement**

Novelty (N)	Claims <u>1-15</u>	YES
	Claims <u>NONE</u>	NO
Inventive Step (IS)	Claims <u>1-15</u>	YES
	Claims <u>NONE</u>	NO
Industrial Applicability (IA)	Claims <u>1-15</u>	YES
	Claims <u>NONE</u>	NO

2. citations and explanations (Rule 70.7)

Claims 1-15 meet the criteria set out in PCT Article 33(2)-(4), because the prior art does not teach or fairly suggest that Simple Network Management Protocol commands include at least a PDU comprising: an identifier signifying that the PDU is a table block access request; an Object Identifier of a table to be accessed; an index to a row within the table to be accessed; and information identifying the number of rows to be accessed.

----- NEW CITATIONS -----

NONE



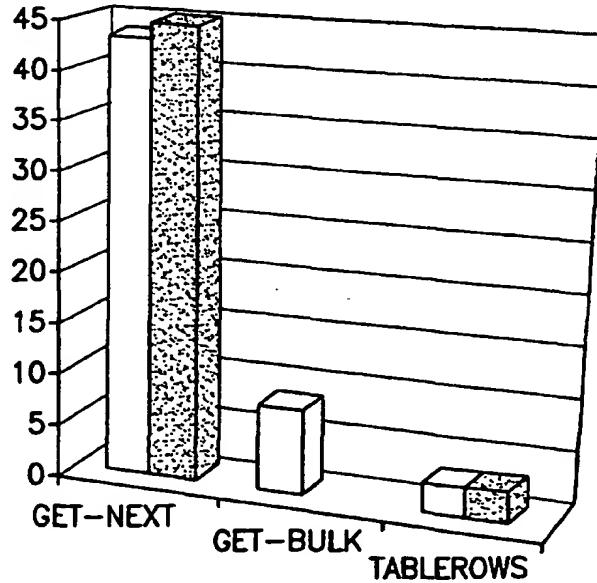
INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(51) International Patent Classification ⁷ : G06F 15/173		A1	(11) International Publication Number: WO 00/20981
(21) International Application Number: PCT/US99/22651		(43) International Publication Date: 13 April 2000 (13.04.00)	(81) Designated States: CA, KR, US, European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE).
(22) International Filing Date: 29 September 1999 (29.09.99)			
(30) Priority Data: 9821524.7 2 October 1998 (02.10.98) GB			Published <i>With a revised version of the international search report.</i>
(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): GENERAL DATACOMM, INC. [US/US]; Park Road Extension, Middlebury, CT 06762 (US).			(88) Date of publication of the revised version of the international search report: 20 July 2000 (20.07.00)
(72) Inventors; and			
(75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): GYMER, David [GB/GB]; 5 Randolph Close, Maldon, Essex CM9 6XP (GB). BURDEN, Paul [GB/GB]; 55 Cricketfield Grove, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex CC9 3EJ (GB).			
(74) Agent: GORDON, David, P.; 65 Woods End Road, Stamford, CT 06905 (US).			

(54) Title: NETWORK MANAGEMENT INFORMATION PROCESSING

(57) Abstract

A method for supplying data from a table in a device responsive to network management protocol commands includes receiving a Protocol Data Unit (PDU) designated as a table block access request (TBAR), identifying the PDU as a TBAR, obtaining an Object Identifier (OI) of a table to be read from the PDU, obtaining an index to a row to be read from the table from the PDU, determining the number of rows to be read based on information obtained from the PDU, looking up information in the table based on the OI and the index, composing a response PDU containing information read from the table for multiple rows based on the number of rows to be read, and outputting a response packet (RP). Optionally, OIs are only included in the RP if requested, and abbreviated OIs are included in the RP. Network devices implementing the method are also provided.



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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US99/22651

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(7) : G06F 15/173
US CL : 709/223

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

U.S. : 709/223, 224, 232; 380/24; 705/16

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

EAST, STN

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 5,802,309 A (COOK et al) 01 September 1998, col 2 line 4 - col 3 line 22	1-15
X	US 5,812,668 A (WEBER) 22 September 1998, col 65 line 9 - col 68 line 11	1-15

 Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C. See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents	*T*	later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
A document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance	*X*	document of particular relevance, the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
E earlier document published on or after the international filing date	*Y*	document of particular relevance, the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art
I document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)	*&*	document member of the same patent family
O document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means		
P document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed		

Date of the actual completion of the international search

19 NOVEMBER 1999

Date of mailing of the international search report

17 APR 2000

Name and mailing address of the ISA/US
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Washington, D.C. 20231

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Authorized officer

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James R. Matthews



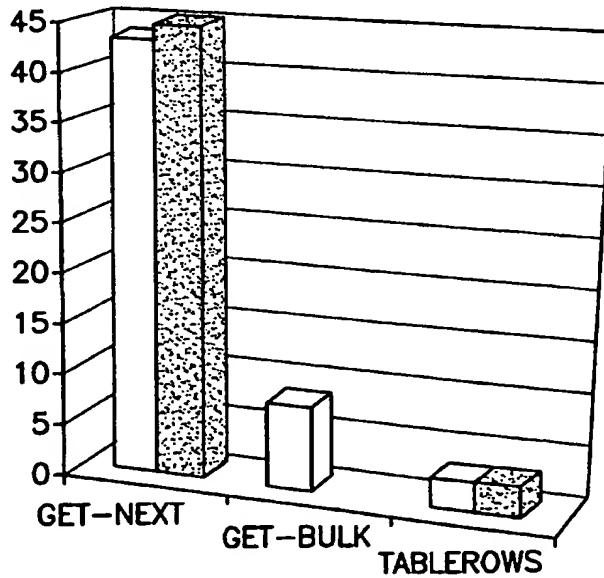
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(30) Priority Data: 9821524.7 2 October 1998 (02.10.98) GB		Published <i>With international search report.</i>	
(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): GENERAL DATACOMM, INC. [US/US]; Park Road Extension, Middletown, CT 06762 (US).			
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A method for supplying data from a table in a device responsive to network management protocol commands includes receiving a Protocol Data Unit (PDU) designated as a table block access request (TBAR), identifying the PDU as a TBAR, obtaining an Object Identifier (OI) of a table to be read from the PDU, obtaining an index to a row to be read from the table from the PDU, determining the number of rows to be read based on information obtained from the PDU, looking up information in the table based on the OI and the index, composing a response PDU containing information read from the table for multiple rows based on the number of rows to be read, and outputting a response packet (RP). Optionally, OIs are only included in the RP if requested, and abbreviated OIs are included in the RP. Network devices implementing the method are also provided.



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NETWORK MANAGEMENT INFORMATION PROCESSING

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to the processing of information for network management. More particularly, but not exclusively, the present invention relates to the processing of information contained in tables for controlling a network.

2. State of the Art

In a distributed network such as the Internet, it is necessary to store various parameters, including routing information, at distributed points across the network and to extract that information for overall management of the network. Since different devices in a network may be made by different manufacturers and be of different types, it is desirable for communication of this information to be substantially device independent.

The Simple Network Management Protocol (SNMP) together with associated Management Information Base (MIB) structures have been designed to achieve device-independent management of a network and are widely used across the Internet. Basic details of SNMP may be found in any of a number of texts on the subject, an example of which is *The Simple Book (An Introduction to Management of TCP/IP-based internets)* by Marshall T. Rose published by Prentice-Hall 1991, the entire disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The invention is particularly concerned with the manipulation of data in tables such as a Management Information Base (MIB). Details of the structure of a MIB may be found in chapter 4, pages 91-130 of *The Simple Book*, referenced above.

Entries within a MIB are associated with Object Identifiers (OIDs) which may be lengthy strings. The invention is particularly concerned with access to tables (such as a MIB) using network management protocols such as the Simple Network Management Protocol (SNMP), a discussion of which may be found in chapter 5, pages 131-186, of The Simple Book.

In order to extract information from a table such as a MIB, SNMP defines Protocol Data Units (PDUs) for exchanging messages and commands and provides a "Get" command and a "Get Next" command which allow information to be retrieved and a table to be traversed effectively. The "Get Next" operator is described on pages 140-142 of the Simple book. Whilst the "Get Next" operator is a powerful tool for traversing a table, it can be inefficient if blocks of data are to be accessed.

Version 2 of the Simple Network Management Protocol provides a "Get Bulk" operator which effectively performs repeated "Get Next" operations. This can lead to significant improvements in efficiency compared to multiple "Get Next" operations. This can result in a significant saving of Protocol Data Units (PDUs) which must be exchanged and also in the total number of bytes which must flow across the network.

However, pursuant to the invention, it has been appreciated that more efficient access to large tables may yet be possible, preferably in a manner not incompatible with existing SNMP architecture. Studies pursuant to the present invention have revealed that a significant amount of the data transferred may comprise Object Identifiers (OIDs). Pursuant to the invention, it has been appreciated that complete OIDs do not necessarily need to be transmitted in every case. It has also been found, pursuant to the invention, that certain operations such as the extraction of a relatively small portion of a relatively large table may be inefficient even when using the "Get Bulk" operation.

It is an aim of the invention to provide methods of extracting data from tables which are compatible with existing network management protocol (such as SNMP) interactions, but which may provide improved efficiency.

According to a first aspect, the invention provides a method of supplying data from a table in a device which is responsive to network management protocol, commands preferably Simple Network Management Protocol commands. The method preferably comprises eight steps:

receiving a Protocol Data Unit designated as a table block access request;

identifying the Protocol Data Unit as a table block access request;

obtaining an Object Identifier of a table to be read from the Protocol Data Unit;

obtaining an index to a row to be read from the table from the Protocol Data Unit;

determining the number of rows to be read based on information obtained from the Protocol Data Unit;

looking up information in the table based on the Object Identifier and the index to the row to be read;

composing a response Protocol Data Unit containing information read from the table for a plurality of rows based on the number of rows to be read;

outputting the response packet.

By providing an Object Identifier for the table and an index to a row (preferably the start row), lengthy Object Identifiers need not be communicated for every row or every table entry. Furthermore, the method may allow immediate access to a given block of rows, for example in the middle of the table, even when the Object Identifiers of those rows are not known.

It will be appreciated that the Simple Network Management Protocol is reviewed and updated from time to time and modifications are proposed. In this specification, which term includes the claims, references to Simple Network Management

Protocol includes derivatives and modifications of the protocol current at the time of filing (whether including enhanced, reduced or alternative functionality); indeed, a modified version of the basic protocol incorporating table access as defined herein is intended to be encompassed by the term. Devices which are responsive to a subset or derivative of SNMP commands are intended to be encompassed by the invention.

Another advantage is that the Object Identifiers of the rows and objects within the table need not be communicated in the response packet; preferably Object Identifiers are only communicated in the response packet if specifically requested. Preferably, if Object Identifiers for the rows are requested, a single Object Identifier, preferably abbreviated, is communicated for each row. It is well-known that Object Identifiers are hierarchical, the Object Identifier of an item within a table comprising the Object Identifier of the table with suffixes dependent on the row and column within the table. By "abbreviated" is meant sufficient identification information from the suffixes, optionally pre-pended with a further portion of the complete Object Identifier or a dummy prefix, but not including the entire Object Identifier.

Preferably, information representative of the number of rows actually included in the response packet is included in the response packet, at least when the number of rows supplied differs from the number of rows requested. This may facilitate determination by the requestor of the amount of information supplied and composition of a subsequent request for remaining information.

Preferably, the method includes selecting one or more columns from which data is to be included based on column identifier information within the received Protocol Data Unit. This may allow data to be selectively extracted from multiple columns and multiple rows within a single operation. Most preferably, the column identifier information is in the form of index information. This avoids the need to communicate the

Object Identifier to each column, and allows specified columns to be accessed even when the Object Identifiers are not known.

In a second aspect, the invention provides a method, in a network management device which issues and accepts network management protocol, preferably Simple Network Management Protocol, Protocol Data Units, of obtaining data from a table in a remote device, preferably arranged to perform a method as defined above. The method preferably comprises six steps:

determining an Object Identifier of a table in the remote device to be accessed;

determining an index to the start of a block of rows from which data within the table is required;

determining the number of rows to be accessed;

composing a Protocol Data Unit designated as a table block access request and including information representative of one or more of said determining steps;

outputting the Protocol Data Unit to the remote device; and

obtaining said data from a response Protocol Data Unit received from the remote device.

Preferably, the method further comprises determining whether the received Protocol Data Unit contains all the information requested and, if not, composing a further request for information.

The method may further comprise supplying the information to a management application.

In a third aspect, the invention provides a network device comprising:

means for responding to Protocol Data Units received containing network management protocol, preferably Simple Network Management Protocol, commands;

means for identifying a received Protocol Data Unit designated as a table block access request;

means for indexing a portion of a stored table based on an Object Identifier and an index to a row to be read from the table from the Protocol Data Unit;

means for determining the number of rows to be read based on information obtained from the Protocol Data Unit;

means for looking up information in the table based on the Object Identifier and the index to the row to be read; and

means for composing a response Protocol Data Unit containing information read from the table for a plurality of rows based on the number of rows to be read.

According to a fourth aspect, the invention provides a Protocol Data Unit comprising:

an identifier signifying that the Protocol Data Unit is a table block access request;

an Object Identifier of a table to be accessed;

an index to a row within the table to be accessed; and

information identifying the number of rows to be accessed.

The Protocol Data Unit preferably further comprises information identifying the number of columns in the table to be accessed and an identifier for each column.

It will be appreciated that the invention can be applied regardless of the information contained within the table to the access and provide a technical improvement in terms of more efficient data transfer and simplified access to large tables.

An embodiment of the invention will now be described, by way of example, with reference to the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is a graph illustrating a comparison between the amount of data to be transferred when access a large table according to conventional methods and according to an embodiment of the invention;

Fig. 2 is a graph illustrating a comparison between the amount of Protocol Data Units to be transferred when access a large table according to conventional methods and according to an embodiment of the invention;

Fig. 3 is a graph illustrating a comparison between the amount of time taken for table retrieval when access a large table according to conventional methods and according to an embodiment of the invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

An embodiment for use in an SNMP-compatible network device having a plurality of MIB tables stored therein will now be described. Details of conventional MIB tables and SNMP commands, together with details of Abstract Syntax Notation One (ASN.1) and Basic Encoding Rules (BER) encoding are assumed to be well-known and will not be described in detail; reference should be made to The Simple Book, together with references 40-53 in the bibliography thereon, or to any of the relevant standards, all of which are incorporated herein by reference.

By way of background summary information, basic formats of an SNMP message, a generic PDU, a request PDU, a Get PDU and a Get Next PDU will be set out, in ASN.1 syntax.

Firstly, a basic message format:-

```
-- top-level message

Message ::==
SEQUENCE {
    version          -- version-1 for this RFC
        INTEGER {
            version-1(0)
        },
    community        -- community name
        OCTET STRING,
```

```
    data          -- e.g., PDUs if trivial
    ANY          -- authentication is being used
}
```

Next, the format of a Protocol Data Unit:-

```
-- protocol data units

PDUs ::=

    CHOICE {
        get-request
        GetRequest-PDU,
        get-next-request
        GetNextRequest-PDU,
        get-response
        GetResponse-PDU,
        set-request
        SetRequest-PDU,
        trap
        Trap-PDU
    }

-- the individual PDUs and commonly used
-- data types will be defined later

END
```

The basic format of a request PDU will now be set out:-

```
-- request/response information

RequestID ::=

    INTEGER

ErrorStatus ::=

    INTEGER {
```

```
noError(0),
tooBig(1),
noSuchName(2),
badValue(3),
readOnly(4)
genErr(5)

}

ErrorIndex ::=

INTEGER

-- variable bindings

VarBind ::=

SEQUENCE {
    name
        ObjectName,
    value
        ObjectSyntax
}

VarBindList ::=

SEQUENCE OF
    VarBind

The format of a standard "Get" PDU is:-
```

```
GetRequest-PDU ::=

[0]
    IMPLICIT SEQUENCE {
        request-id
            RequestID,
        error-status          -- always 0
            ErrorStatus,
        error-index           -- always 0
            ErrorIndex,
```

```
variable-bindings
  VarBindList
}
```

The format of a "Get Next" PDU is:-

```
GetNextRequest-PDU ::==
  [1]
    IMPLICIT SEQUENCE {
      request-id
      RequestID,
      error-status          -- always 0
      ErrorStatus,
      error-index           -- always 0
      ErrorIndex,
      variable-bindings
      VarBindList
    }
```

Further details of the components of the entities defined above and other background information may be found by reference to RFC 1157 or other standard texts.

According to this embodiment, we propose a modified PDU which we designate a Get Table Row message. This is defined below using the ASN.1 syntax:-

```
GetTableRow-PDU ::==
  SEQUENCE {
    request-id
    INTEGER,
    error-status
    INTEGER {
      noError(0),
      tooBig(1),
      noSuchName(2),
      badValue(3),
      readOnly(4),
    }
```

```

        genErr(5)
    },

    error-index
        INTEGER,
    snmpp-version
        INTEGER {
            version1 (1)           -- First implementation
        },
    table-name
        OBJECT-IDENTIFIER,      -- OID of the table being
retrieved
    start-index
        INTEGER,                -- starting row index for
retrieval
    max-rows
        INTEGER,                -- maximum no. of rows to be
retrieved
    table-size
        INTEGER,                -- -1 indicates "get all rows"
    instances-included
        INTEGER {
            no(0),                -- Row instances not encoded
            yes(1)                -- Row instances are encoded
        },
    column-total
        INTEGER,                -- No.of columns to be retrieved

    column1
        INTEGER,                -- column id for first column
    column2
        INTEGER,                -- column id for second column
    ...
    columnN
        INTEGER,                -- column id for Nth column

    variable-bindings
        varBindList
}

VarBind ::=

    SEQUENCE {
        row-instance1
            OBJECT-IDENTIFIER,      -- optional instance OID for row
        value
            objectSyntax           -- value for this row/column entry
    }

```

This command is intended to allow a management application to retrieve arbitrary rows from a table without having to issue repeated GetNext commands to get to the correct rows. For optimum efficiency and flexibility, it is found to be highly

desirable that the command can access arbitrary columns, and not just complete rows.

An explanation of the fields in a GetTableRows request PDU as would be sent from a management application follows:-

- **request-id**
The unique request id for this PDU
- **snmpp-version**
Indicates the revision level of the SNMPP PDU (should always be set to 1).
- **table-name**
The OBJECT IDENTIFIER representing the table to be retrieved. For example, the interfaces table in rfc1213 would have a table name of **1.3.6.1.2.1.2.2**
- **start-index**
Identifies the first row index to be retrieved from the table. This represents essentially the row number in that table (starting 0). So, to start retrieving from the first row, start-index would be set to 0. To retrieve from the 25th row, start-index would be set to 24, etc.
- **max-rows**
Represents the maximum number of rows to be retrieved (if possible). If all rows from the start-index to end of table are required, this should be set to -1.
- **column-total**
Represents the total number of columns to be retrieved from the table (the column ids are encoded immediately after this object in the PDU).
- **column-id**
A column id is encoded for each of the columns requested. So, for example, if five columns had been requested, then five consecutive INTEGERS would be encoded representing the respective column ids. The id represents the conceptual column number for that table (starting 1). So, for example, consider the ifTable of rfc1213, the column-id for ifOperStatus

would be 8, since this is the eighth conceptual column in the table.

The request PDU will contain an empty varbind list (since all the information above is sufficient to identify what we are requesting).

Note: All the other objects exist in the request PDU, but will have their default values set.

To implement this embodiment, the (modified) SNMP agent of the network device must process an incoming GetTableRows request and package the response message to send back to the requestor. The agent should attempt to include all the requested rows into the response PDU, but due to the restrictions of message size, this may not be possible. In these cases, it should send back as many rows as it can, updating the associated fields to identify precisely the rows it has returned (this is so that the requestor can send another GetTableRows request message amended to retrieve the remaining rows).

A GetTableRows response PDU should be sent to the management application with the following fields set:-

- **request-id**
The unique request id for this PDU.
- **snmpv-version**
Indicates the revision level of the SNMPP PDU (should always be set to 1)
- **table-name**
The OBJECT IDENTIFIER representing the table to be retrieved. For example, the interfaces table in rfc1213 would have a table name of 1.3.6.1.2.1.2.2. This must match the request PDU.
- **start-index**
Identifies the first row index to be retrieved from the table. This represents essentially the row number in that table (starting 0). So, to start retrieving

from the first row, start-index would be set to 0. To retrieve from the 25th row, start-index would be set to 24, etc. This must match the request PDU.

- max-rows

This will be set to the actual number of rows included in this response PDU.

- table-size

Stores the actual size of the table requested (i.e. how many rows exist in the table at that point in time).

- instances-included

set to no(0) if the row instances have not been encoded in the varbinds representing the first column requested, otherwise set to yes(1) if they have.

- column-total

Represents the total number of columns retrieved from the table (the column ids are encoded immediately after this object in the PDU). This must match the request PDU.

- column-id

A column id is encoded for each of the columns requested. So, for example, then five consecutive INTEGERS would be encoded representing the respective column ids. The id represents the conceptual column number for that table (starting 1). So, for example, consider the ifTable of rfc1213, the column-id for ifOperStatus would be 8, since this is the eighth conceptual column in the table. Each of these column-ids must match the request PDU.

- varbind list

A list of varbinds must be encoded which represent the data contained in the rows returned. The order of the varbind list is on a per-row basis. So, for example, if five columns had been requested, the first five varbinds would constitute the values for the first row returned, where varbind1 represents the data for column1, varbind2 contains the data for column2 and so

on. In most cases, the name of the varbind is not encoded (see the later section on varbind encoding).

The SNMPP GetTableRows message is encoded with a message type of 0xAF, which corresponds to:-

ASN_CONTEXT 1 ASN_CONSTRUCTOR 1 0XF

A variable binding list returned in a GetTableRows response message will contain each of the values within the table encoded as usual varbind objects. The varbind list must always contain enough variables encoded in the varbind list will be multiples of column-total.

The variable binding for each element in a row will be encoded in order of column-ids requested. The object-name of a varbind will only be encoded if the following two criteria are met:-

1. The instances-included variable is set to yes(1)
2. The varbind being encoded represents the first column-id of a row.

If the object name is encoded, it will represent the instance oid identifying that row (starting with 0.0, because the first two subids must each be encoded in a single octet according to SNMP).

This is best explained by example, so consider the ifTable and the TableRows request message has requested two columns, namely ifAdminStatus (1.3.6.1.2.1.2.2.1.7) and ifOperStatus (1.3.6.1.2.1.2.2.1.8).

The column-ids will be encoded as two INTEGERs, namely 7 and 8.

Supposing the response message was returning 3 rows (for ifIndex 1,2 and 3). The varbind list will be encoded as follows:-

Varbind	Object Name (row-Instance)	Value
1	0.0.1	up(1)
2	Not Encoded	up(1)
3	0.0.2	up(1)
4	Not Encoded	down(2)
5	0.0.3	testing (3)
6	Not Encoded	Down(2)

The above varbinds would represent the following three rows in the **ifTable**:-

ifIndex	ifAdminStatus	ifOperstatus
1	up(1)	up(1)
2	up(2)	down(2)
3	testing(3)	down(2)

The following pseudo-code outlines the basic steps to be performed to implement the embodiment (some of which will co-exist with other steps which are part of a conventional SNMP agent) :-

- Receive PDU
- [Other SNMP processing]
- Check whether PDU designated "GetTableRows"
- If not so designated, skip to Continued Processing
- If so designated:-
 - Obtain OID of table to be read from table-name

- Obtain index to first row to read from start-index .
- Obtain number of rows to read from max-rows
- Obtain indices to columns to be read column1..N
- Check whether encoded row ids requested in instances-included

- Look up information in specified table using indices
- Compose response packet including:-
 - * Information read from table in varbinds
 - * Number of rows actually read in max-rows
 - * Row ids if specified in varbinds for first column
- Output response packet

[Continued Processing]

It will be appreciated that the ordering of information is not critical and can be changed, as can all labels used both for entities with the PDU and the PDU designation (the label GetTableRows being used here as a suitable label to designate a table block access request). The information contained in the PDU may be replaced by other combinations of information which achieve the same function (for example, the last row may be supplied in place of the first row, and the indexing performed in reverse). Not all functions need be included.

Each feature described above may be provided independently, unless otherwise stated.

Claims:

1. A method of supplying data from a table in a device which is responsive to network management protocol commands, the method comprising receiving a Protocol Data Unit designated as a table block access request;
identifying the Protocol Data Unit as a table block access request;
obtaining an Object Identifier of a table to be read from the Protocol Data Unit;
obtaining an index to a row to be read from the table from the Protocol Data Unit;
determining the number of rows to be read based on information obtained from the Protocol Data Unit;
looking up information in the table based on the Object Identifier and the index to the row to be read;
composing a response Protocol Data Unit containing information read from the table for a plurality of rows based on the number of rows to be read;
outputting the response packet.
2. A method according to Claim 1, wherein Object Identifiers are only included in the response packet if requested.
3. A method according to Claim 1 or Claim 2, wherein if Object Identifiers for the rows are to be included in the response packet, a single Object Identifier is included for each row.
4. A method according to Claim 2 or Claim 3 wherein abbreviated Object Identifiers are included in the response packet.

5. A method according to any preceding claim wherein information representative of the number of rows actually included in the response packet is included in the response packet, at least when the number of rows supplied differs from the number of rows requested.

6. A method according to any preceding claim including selecting one or more columns from which data is to be included based on column identifier information within the received Protocol Data Unit.

7. A method according to Claim 6, wherein the column identifier information is in the form of index information.

8. A method, in a network management device which issues and accepts network management protocol Protocol Data Units, of obtaining data from a table in a remote device, preferably arranged to perform a method according to any preceding claim, the method comprising:

determining:- (a) an Object Identifier of a table in the remote device to be accessed;

(b) an index to the start of a block of rows from which data within the table is required;

(c) the number of rows to be accessed;

composing a Protocol Data Unit designated as a table block access request and including information representative of said determining;

outputting the Protocol Data Unit to the remote device; and

obtaining said data from a response Protocol Data Unit received from the remote device.

9. A method according to Claim 8 further comprising determining whether the received Protocol Data Unit contains all the data requested and, if not, composing a further request for data.

10. A method according to Claim 8 or Claim 9 further comprising supplying the data to a management application.

11. A method according to any preceding claim, wherein the network management protocol is Simple Network Management Protocol, or a derivative or modification thereof.

12. A network device comprising:

means for responding to Protocol Data Units received containing network management protocol commands;

means for identifying a received Protocol Data Unit designated as a table block access request;

means for indexing a portion of a stored table based on (a) an Object Identifier and (b) an index to a row to be read from the table, obtained from the Protocol Data Unit;

means for determining the number of rows to be read based on information obtained from the Protocol Data Unit;

means for looking up information in the table based on the Object Identifier and the index to the row to be read;

means for composing a response Protocol Data Unit containing information read from the table for a plurality of rows based on the number of rows to be read.

13. A device according to Claim 12, wherein the network management protocol is Simple Network Management Protocol, or a derivative or modification thereof.

14. A Protocol Data Unit comprising:

an identifier signifying that the Protocol Data Unit is a table block access request;

an Object Identifier of a table to be accessed;

an index to a row within the table to be accessed;

information identifying the number of rows to be accessed.

15. A Protocol Data Unit according to Claim 12 further comprising information identifying the number of columns in the table to be accessed and an identifier for each column.

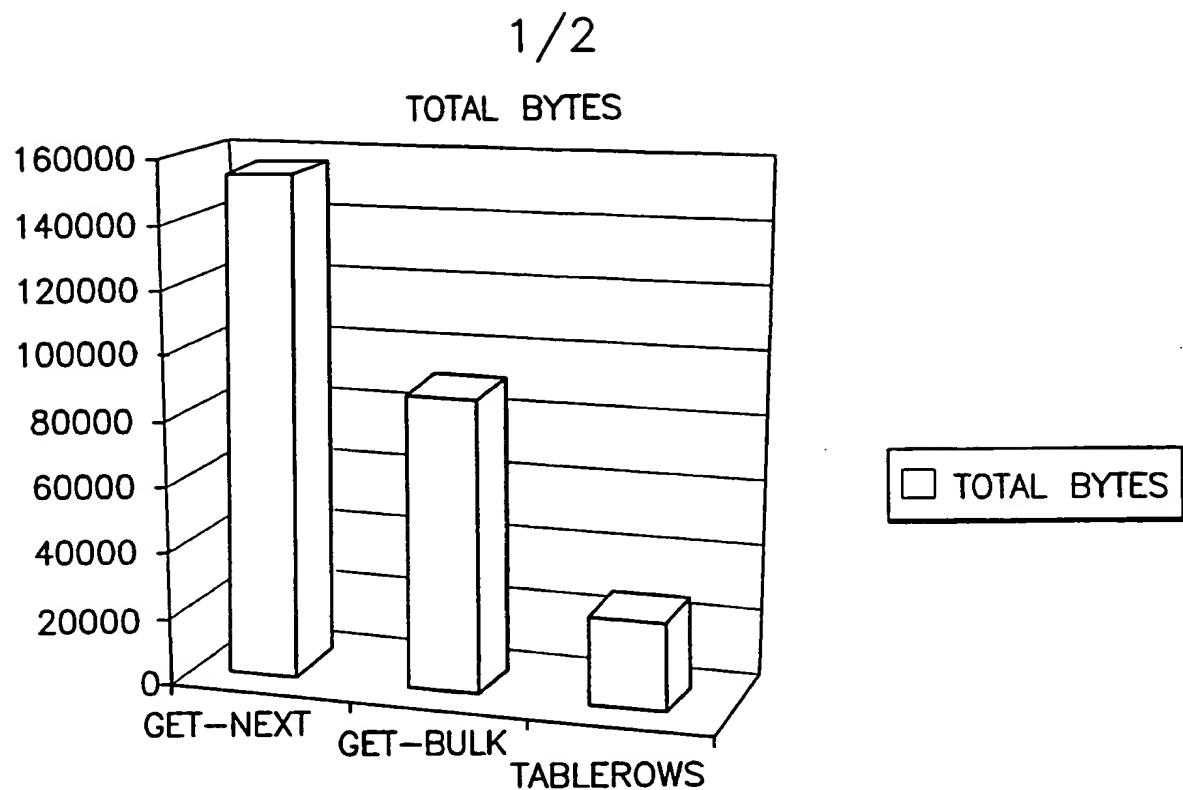


FIG.1

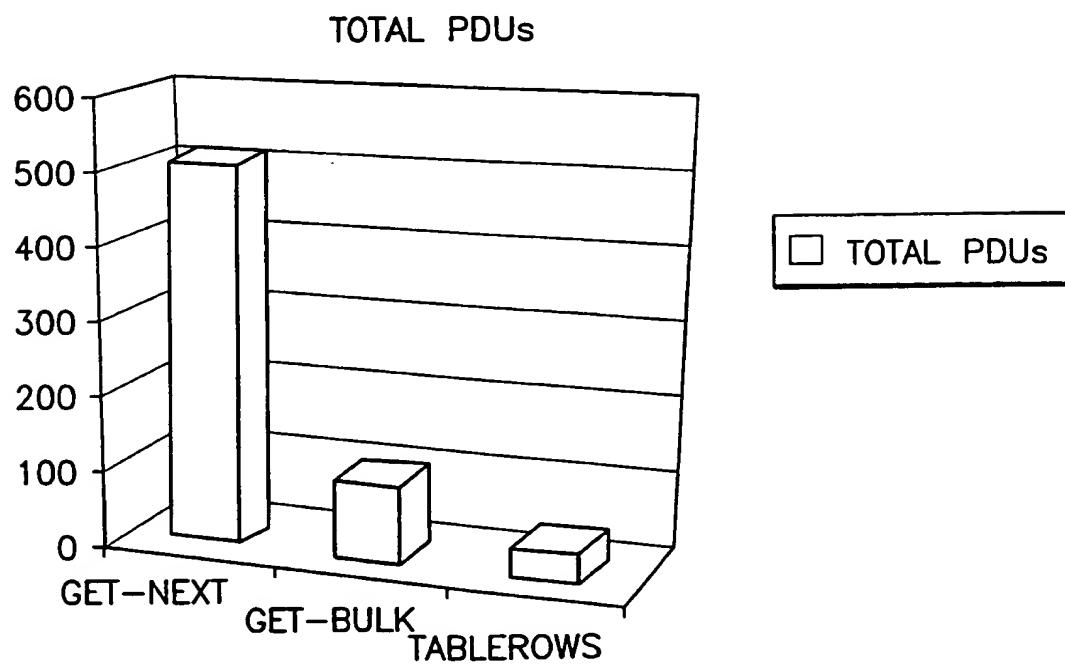
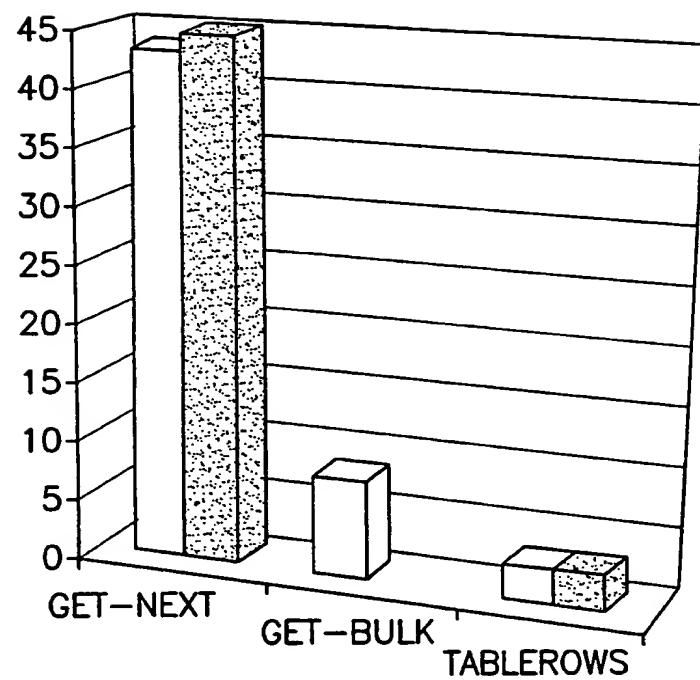


FIG.2

2/2



- CALCULATED TIME (SECONDS)
- ACTUAL TIME (SECONDS)

FIG.3

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US99/22651

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(6) : G06F 15/16, 15/163, 16/177
US CL : 709/223

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

U.S. : 709/223, 224, 232; 380/24; 705/16

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

EAST, STN

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 5,802,309 A (COOK et al) 01 September 1998, col 2 line 4 - col 3 line 22	1-15
X	US 5,812,668 A (WEBER) 22 September 1998, col 65 line 9 - col 68 line 11	1-15

 Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C. See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:	*T*	later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
A document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance	*X*	document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
E earlier document published on or after the international filing date	*Y*	document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art
L document which may throw doubt on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)	*Z*	document member of the same patent family
O document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means		
P document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed		

Date of the actual completion of the international search

19 NOVEMBER 1999

Date of mailing of the international search report

10 DEC 1999

Name and mailing address of the ISA/US
Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks
Box PCT
Washington, D.C. 20231

Facsimile No. (703) 305-7201

Authorized officer

Ivan C. Pierce, III *James R. Matthews*

Telephone No. (703) 308-1058

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

(PCT Article 18 and Rules 43 and 44)

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JUN 21 2001
Technology Center 2100

Applicant's or agent's file reference <i>59 80673</i> F.2228/WO	FOR FURTHER ACTION see Notification of Transmittal of International Search Report (Form PCT/ISA/220) as well as, where applicable, item 5 below.	
International application No. PCT/GB 00/03116	International filing date (day/month/year) 14/08/2000	(Earliest) Priority Date (day/month/year) 18/08/1999

Applicant

ASTRAZENECA UK LIMITED

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Technology Center 2600

This International Search Report has been prepared by this International Searching Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 18. A copy is being transmitted to the International Bureau.

This International Search Report consists of a total of 3 sheets. It is also accompanied by a copy of each prior art document cited in this report.

1. Basis of the report

a. With regard to the language, the international search was carried out on the basis of the international application in the language in which it was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

the international search was carried out on the basis of a translation of the international application furnished to this Authority (Rule 23.1(b)).

b. With regard to any **nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence** disclosed in the international application, the international search was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing :

contained in the international application in written form.

filed together with the international application in computer readable form.

furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.

furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.

the statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.

the statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished

2. Certain claims were found unsearchable (See Box I).

3. Unity of invention is lacking (see Box II).

4. With regard to the title,

the text is approved as submitted by the applicant.

the text has been established by this Authority to read as follows:

PHARMACEUTICAL COMPOSITIONS COMPRISING A- (2-AMINOETHYL) -BENZOTHIAZOLONE AND
DISODIUM CROMOGLYCATE OR NEDOCROMIL

5. With regard to the abstract,

the text is approved as submitted by the applicant.

the text has been established, according to Rule 38.2(b), by this Authority as it appears in Box III. The applicant may, within one month from the date of mailing of this international search report, submit comments to this Authority.

6. The figure of the drawings to be published with the abstract is Figure No.

as suggested by the applicant.

because the applicant failed to suggest a figure.

because this figure better characterizes the invention.

 None of the figures.

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

From the INTERNATIONAL BUREAU

PCT

NOTIFICATION OF ELECTION

(PCT Rule 61.2)

Date of mailing (day/month/year)
26 May 2000 (26.05.00)

To:
Assistant Commissioner for Patents
United States Patent and Trademark
Office
Box PCT
Washington, D.C.20231
ETATS-UNIS D'AMERIQUE
in its capacity as elected Office

International application No.
PCT/US99/22651

Applicant's or agent's file reference
GDC-136 PCT

International filing date (day/month/year)
29 September 1999 (29.09.99)

Priority date (day/month/year)
02 October 1998 (02.10.98)

Applicant

GYMER, David et al

1. The designated Office is hereby notified of its election made:

in the demand filed with the International Preliminary Examining Authority on:
23 March 2000 (23.03.00)

in a notice effecting later election filed with the International Bureau on:

2. The election was

was not

made before the expiration of 19 months from the priority date or, where Rule 32 applies, within the time limit under Rule 32.2(b).

The International Bureau of WIPO
34, chemin des Colombettes
1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland

Facsimile No.: (41-22) 740.14.35

Authorized officer

Juan Cruz

Telephone No.: (41-22) 338.83.38

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No

PCT/GB 00/03116

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
 IPC 7 A61K31/47 A61K31/43 A61K31/35

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHEDMinimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)
 IPC 7 A61K

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

EMBASE, CHEM ABS Data, MEDLINE, EPO-Internal, BIOSIS, PAJ, WPI Data

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	WO 93 24473 A (BROWN ROGER CHARLES ;CHESHIRE DAVID RANULF (GB); FISONS PLC (GB);) 9 December 1993 (1993-12-09) cited in the application page 7, line 22 - line 29; example 6 ---	1-17
Y	LAL S. ET AL: "Nedocromil sodium is more effective than cromolyn sodium for the treatment of chronic reversible obstructive airway disease." CHEST, (1993) 104/2 (438-447). , XP000986434 page 439, column 1, paragraph 2 ---	1-14 -/-

Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.

Patent family members are listed in annex.

* Special categories of cited documents :

- *A* document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance
- *E* earlier document but published on or after the international filing date
- *L* document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)
- *O* document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means
- *P* document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

- *T* later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
- *X* document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
- *Y* document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art.
- *&* document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

1 March 2001

Date of mailing of the international search report

07/03/2001

Name and mailing address of the ISA

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No

PCT/GB 00/03116

C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	<p>LURIE A. ET AL: "Long-term management of reversible obstructive airways disease in adults." LUNG, (1990) 168/SUPPL. (154-167). , XP000986437 page 157, paragraph 3 -page 158, paragraph 1 ---</p>	1-14
Y	<p>GONZALEZ J.P. ET AL: "Nedocromil sodium. A preliminary review of its pharmacodynamic and pharmacokinetic properties, and therapeutic efficacy in the treatment of reversible obstructive airways disease." DRUGS, (1987) 34/5 (560-577). , XP000986536 page 575, column 1 -----</p>	1-14

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International Application No

PCT/GB 00/03116

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